STAT   NOTE FOR:

        FROM:

STAT   SUBJECT: comments on leaks

STAT   1. At the 15 March 1983 meeting of the UDIS,   arranged for

STAT   former journalist   and then a CIA staffer,

 STAT   to comment on leaks from his perspective as a long-time journalist news man.

STAT   2.   opened by commenting that he thought the provision in

NSDD-84 calling for regulation of press contacts was a "non-starter" because there

were so many press contacts in social environments which could not be

controlled by official regulation. He said that his journalistic experience

indicated that leaks come from: senior officials trying to implement policy;

junior officials trying to frustrate policy; spontaneous answers to questions from

journalists; and government personnel trying to be helpful to journalists.

STAT   stated that journalists usually don't write stories based on

single sources unless the source data is consistent with other known information.

As an exception, he cited a case in which then Assistant to the President Brzezinski,

in discussions with journalists on Soviet plans to intervene in Afghanistan, disclosed

STAT   SCI material on Soviet military preparations.   said most news stories

are built up from bits and pieces gathered over time. He stated that a great deal

of data on sensitive subjects comes from official spokesmen speaking on a

background basis without attribution. He noted that journalists working a particular

subject will usually contact desk officers to try to get data. They generally

get turned down, he said. He advised that specialists on Congressional staffs can

be very good sources, but noted that they usually deal only with a very small number

STAT   of journalists.   said recently retired persons can be productive sources

through their ability to keep up fairly well with their former work using contacts

with still employed colleagues. He noted that the extensive coordination involved

in developing NIEs results in many people being exposed to sensitive data, thus

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increasing the likelihood of leaks. He advised that, with few exceptions, outside contractors are not overly talkative with the press. [   ] stated that long-standing friendships or contacts give established journalists entrees which they can try to exploit. He said he had found a tendency on the part of officials to ~~thing~~ think they were protesting intelligence sources and methods through generalizing classified information when they were talking to journalists. He stated that he didn't think recipients of the NID and/~~other senior~~ similar documents ~~intended for senior officials~~ paid any attention to the security warnings on those materials. He suggested ~~use of~~ occasional use of a cover sheet stating in short, simple language that the very essence of the NID contents was sensitive, not just the details. He suggested further that the language and the format of such cover sheets be varied each time they are used to avoid losing customer attention through perceptions of stereotyping.

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3. In response to ~~a question~~ a question, [   ] said he didn't think the <u>Washington Star</u>'s attitude ~~as~~ toward the INtelligence ~~Commin~~ Community was as adversarial as is that of the <u>Post</u>. He noted that journalists make and keep their reputations by writing interesting stories, and that there is a career risk in withholding a story on ~~an~~ national security grounds only to see another journalist dig out the same story later and publish it. He said he had seen items in the NID which appeared in the press the same day. He commented that this had to mean that someone with early access to the NID called a journalist immediately to pass on the data. He was asked if he thought the proposal to criminalize leaks by Government employees would meaningfully impact on leaks. He ~~replied~~ replied that he doubted it would affect established relationships between knowledgeable officials and serious journalists (which he defined as the elite of the Washington press corps). He said officials who wanted to plant an item in the press would generally use the <u>Washington Post</u> or the <u>New York Times</u>.

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4. In response to a question about Jack Anderson's sources, [   ] said he thought Anderson probably got his material from low level personnel acting out of spite, revenge, a desire to satisfy ego, or similar motives. Another

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[   ]

security data. Yet another questioner asked if journalists would

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likely ever reveal their sources to investigators. [   ] said no, adding that if word ever got out that a journalist cooperated in a leak investigation, he'd better look for a job in a different field because no source would ~~cooperate~~ deal with him again.

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